

LET'S EXPLORE

BYWAYS OF ALLAMUCHY



By JOHN T. CUNNINGHAM

BOYS and girls in Allamuchy talk as much about "evidences of the glacier" and places of historic and scenic interest as they do about Joe DiMaggio's batting average or Elizabeth Taylor's new movie. To them "Let's Explore" means an invitation to know New Jersey.

They know particularly about their own back yard, mainly because of the enthusiasm of an Allamuchy teacher, Mrs. Helen Johnson. Four years ago they started state-wide tours under Mrs. Johnson's guidance and much of the time they used The News's feature, "Let's Explore," to help them learn about New Jersey.

Above all, Mrs. Johnson has for years been calling the attention of Allamuchy to its own fascinating section. A tour of the land surrounding Allamuchy would be incomplete without calling on Mrs. Johnson and her students. It would be even better to have them along. Accordingly, let's take them with us today.

ALLAMUCHY is six miles north of Hackettstown on the Hackettstown-Andover road. We pick up our boys and girls in front of the school and swing left on the first road past the school to begin our visit to Allamuchy's back yard.

"Look at those pine and tamarack trees on the left," Dick Bartow soon suggests. "That's one of the many bird beats built by Rutherford Stuyvesant to provide shelter for the English pheasants he brought over in 1888."

At the first intersection Louise Smith and Barbara Huff speak up, pointing to a stone house 500 feet across the field ahead. "That's the Old Home Farm house that Jonathan Shotwell built in 1770," says Louise. "Quakers who came up here from Hunterdon brought their own wooden framework and used local stones for the walls."

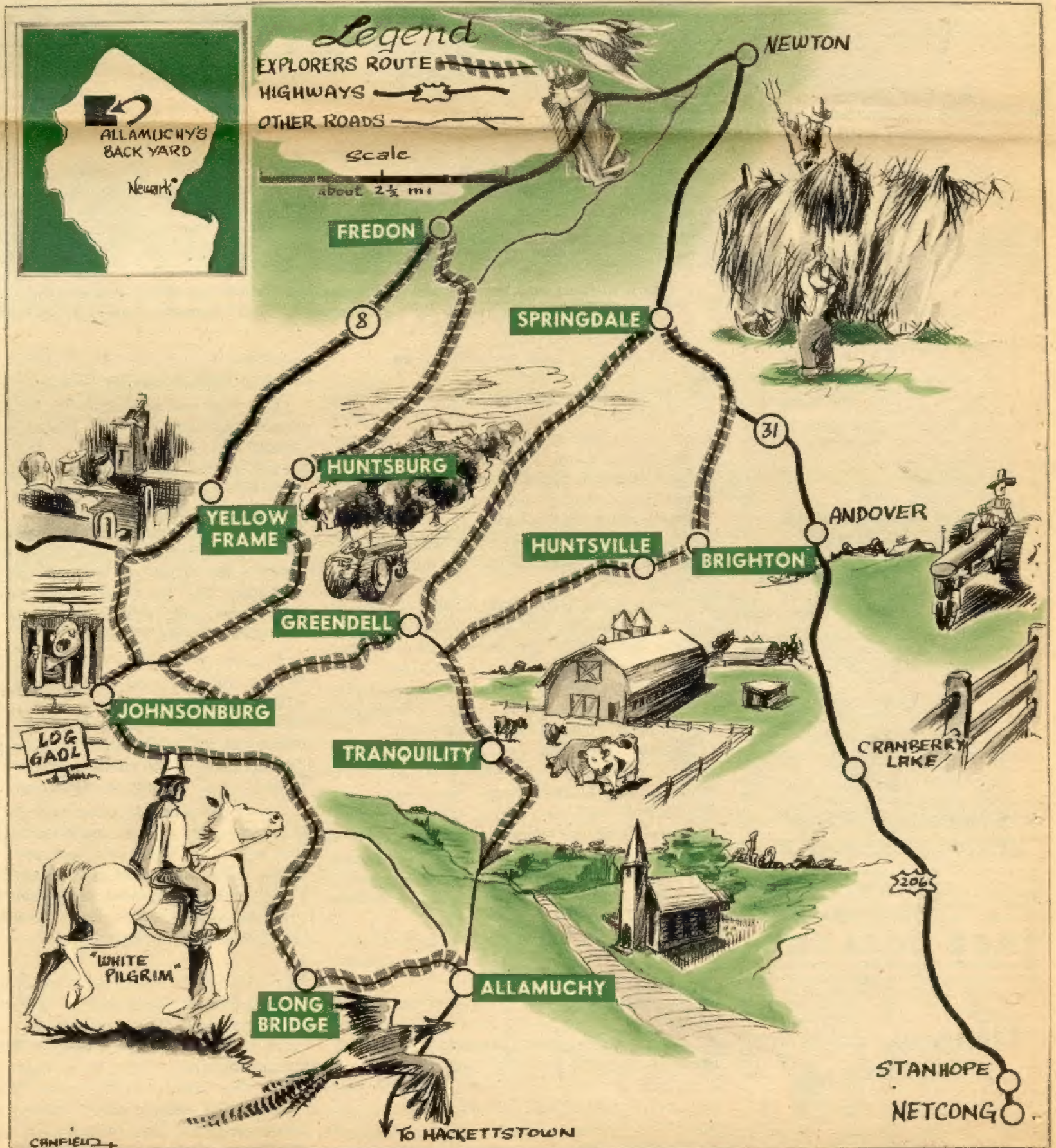
"Folks say that Bishop Francis Asbury preached from a haycock in that field 146 years ago," Barbara adds.

We turn right over the Pequest River and over the tracks of the Lehigh & Hudson River Railway, freight-carrying bridge route linking New England and the South. By keeping right at the next fork and then swinging left at the next two intersections we are on the way to Johnsonburg.

(Continued on Following Page)

One of the great dairy farms in the Allamuchy area is visited by Gloria Kasper and Wanda Stewart. Farm

is on Panther Ledge road, named for "big cats" once in vicinity. Outline of tour is shown in map below.



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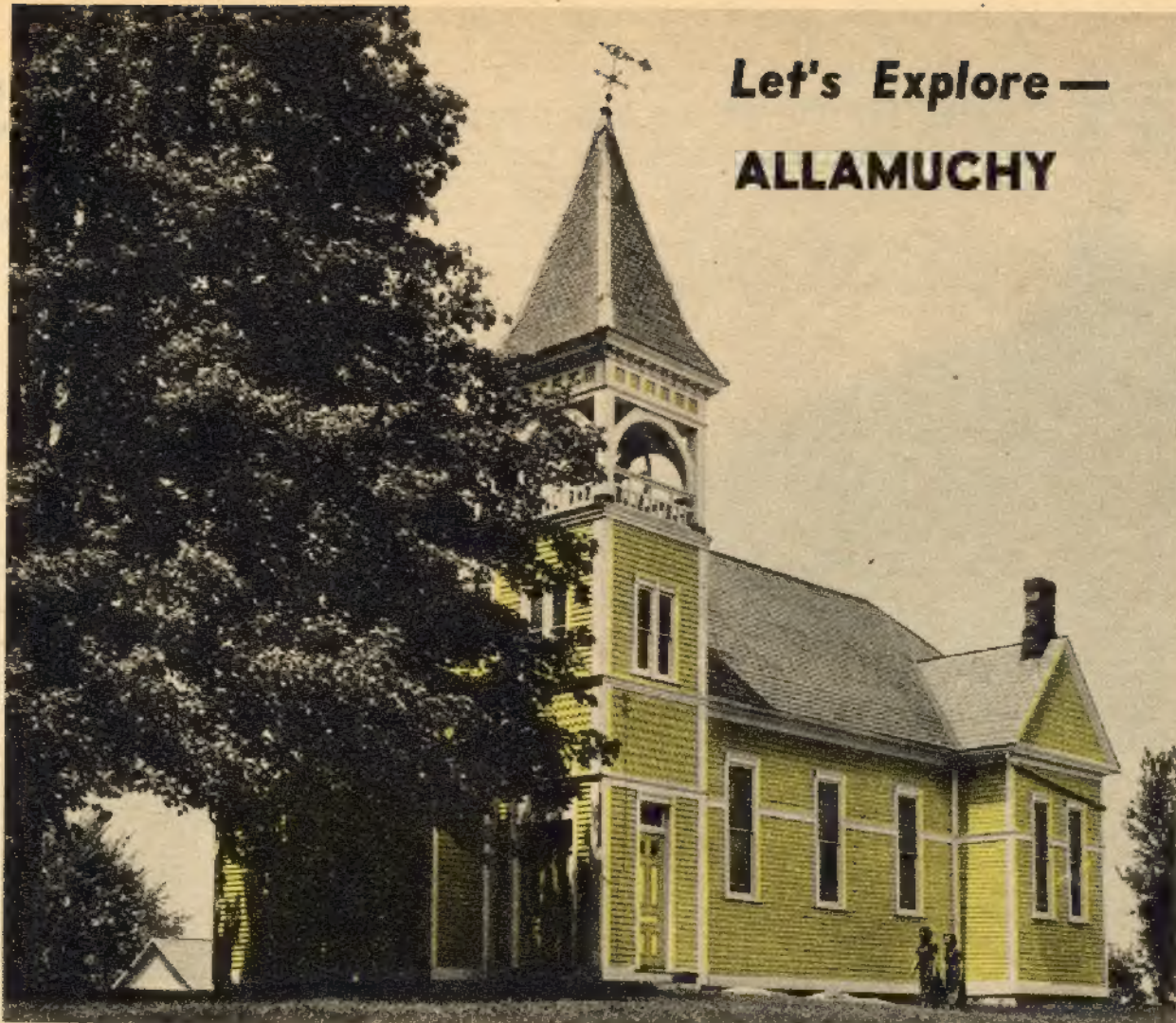
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Let's Explore —
ALLAMUCHY

Yellow Frame Church in Warren County was originally part of Sussex County.
Painted a bright yellow, the Presbyterian edifice is a West Jersey landmark.



Barbara Huff and Dan Jenkins midway in long trek up sharp grade near Fredon.
Climb is steep, but view of farm country in Kittatinny Valley is rewarding.

(Continued from Preceding Page)

Now the boys are debating where there are evidences of the glacier. Bill Staples points out that a great lake once covered this entire valley, with the best evidence being the muck lands near Great Meadows. Some muck land is seen on either side of this road and Dan Jenkins advises that the big boulders strewn over the fields are another evidence that the glacier once ground through here.

Ahead a red barn with a big red silo to match is close by the road. Dan suggests a stop about 200 feet ahead directly opposite the big tree to look at the almost forgotten and neglected stone milestone bearing the inscription "2 TO LG." Translated, that means "Two Miles to Log Gaol."

Pauline Levonuk takes up from that point. "Log Gaol was the name given to what is now Johnsonburg," she says. "It was called that because of the county jail made of logs in town. German settlers came here first and in about 1753 Jonathan Pettit built a tavern. He had so many visitors he had to build little log cabins outside."

Pauline grins, and adds: "I guess Jonathan had the country's first tourist cabins!"

AN imposingly neat ivy-covered stone house on a hillock to the left past the "LG" milestone commands attention. Wanda Stewart tells the story of how Dr. Samuel Kennedy Jr. came to the house in 1765 and became Warren County's most famous early doctor as he rode through the countryside on a horse. "He taught many doctors their

profession and had 14 children," Wanda says in telescoping Dr. Kennedy's life.

The blue and white inn in Johnsonburg's center appears in the distance straight ahead but Dick points to the Christian Cemetery to the left before the town is reached. "I want to show you the White Pilgrim's monument," he says. "He was pretty famous because he rode around on a white horse and was always dressed in white. He preached here one day, caught smallpox the next day and died." The monument adds that the "White Pilgrim" was Rev. Joseph Thomas.

A great rock ledge dominates the route to the right beyond the cemetery. "They call that Mount Rascal," Bill chuckles. "They say that when there was a school house up there the boys used to go up on Sundays to play cards. Folks said the rascals were up on the mountain."

Gloria Kasper says the way to Route 8 is to the right at the inn then left beyond the school. "This was a very religious town," Gloria says as you make the turns. "That stone house next to the inn was once the Episcopal Church and the school was the Presbyterian chapel."

ON Route 8 a right turn is made toward Yellow Frame and Fredon. The boys and girls have been dictating the historical stops but the motorist's eye is filling in the scenic details. This is a splendid ride, fairly free from traffic, over rising and falling hills where many cows and dairy barns bespeak the prosperous nature of this farm country.

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JULY 23, 1950



Old Grist mill at Tranquility is no longer in use but the neat structure reflected in the still waters is a favorite spot of artists with brush or camera. That's Pauline Levonuk on scene. Section was once known as Kennedy Mills and slurring of "Kennedy" led to Tranquility being known for 50 years as "Candy Town."

Louise Smith and Barbara Huff stroll along lane beside Old Home Farm, built in 1770 by Quakers who brought own wooden framework. Local stones were used for walls now entirely covered by stucco.

Yellow Frame Church is the next stop and the name of the Presbyterian Church overlooking the valley is exact. Betty Reeder directs you to a marker in the cemetery which shows the dividing line between Sussex and Warren counties. While Gloria and Pauline check the monument Betty tells you that once Yellow Frame Church was astride the boundary line. "It got confusing," she says. "The preacher was in one county and the congregation in another."

Past the church the road swings down and passes under high tension wires. Directly ahead turn right and start the sharp climb up the mountain. The road rises 200 feet in a half mile and at the top a stop to look back gives one of the state's best views. Then turn right at the next crossroad on a road that hugs the side of the mountain for several miles and gives a magnificent view over the orchards close by the route.

THE road swings through the Lackawanna Cutoff again and beyond take the road to the left. The road is good and soon touches the macadam strip into Springdale on Route 31, after once again having passed through the cutoff.

Barbara tells about the cutoff. "The railroad built it about 40 years ago to save 11 miles between Port Morris and Delaware Water Gap," she relates. "It cost \$11,000,000 and was known then as one of the engineering wonders of the world."

Turn right on Route 31 and about a mile away take the next right off the highway

back through more of the excellent farm country in which Sussex and Warren counties abound. The road runs along the north side of the cutoff, swings right beyond Turtle Pond then goes left through the cutoff for the fourth time on the trip. At the next "T" intersection keep left into Tranquility past the old Tranquility Mills, a mecca for artists and photographers.

Back in Warren County again the huge dairy barns are impressive. Louise tells us that few small farmers remain in the area any more. "In fact," Betty adds, "Nearly all the farms around here have been bought by four big owners."

BEYOND the mill the route passes the beautiful old Tranquility Church and a right swing on the highway leads back to Allamuchy. The boys and girls have one more story left and they let Wanda tell it. Pointing to Haggerty's in the center of town she recounts that once there were two mills on the same stream, owned by men named Till and Haggerty. Till controlled the water but Haggerty had the better mill. Haggerty would gather his customers together, then send one of them up to Till's mill. When Till opened the sluiceway water flowed down through Haggerty's mill and the latter ground while the water ran. The feud ended when Till's mill burned down.

Thus ends the trip through Allamuchy's back yard with local guides. Little traffic, lots of scenery and good local lore have been the order of the day. What more could any one ask?

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